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DIRECTOR, FBI

4/11/68

SAC, WFO (157-new)

MODERN STRIVERS, aka
Strivers
RM - INFORMATION CONCERNING

Enclosed for the Bureau are eight (8) copies of
an LHM reflecting information concerning the Modern Strivers.

Source mentioned in LHM is [redacted]

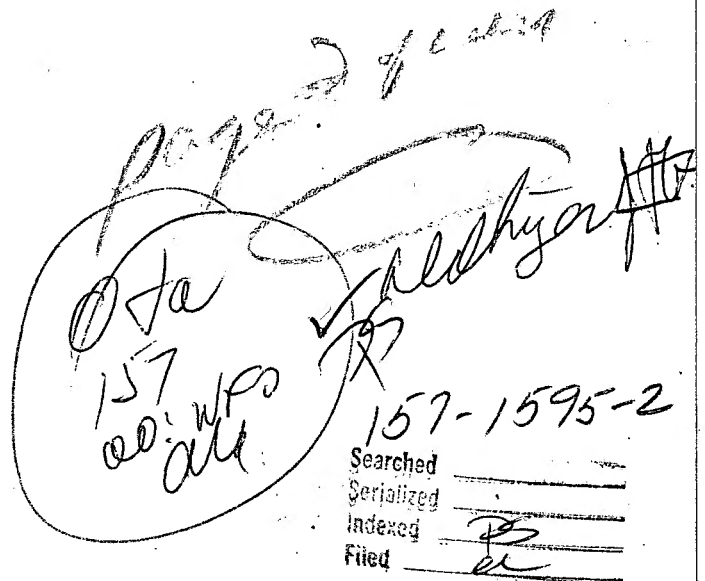
[redacted] who was interviewed by SA JOSEPH A CONNORS, JR., on an
unrelated matter.

Interview with [redacted] was conducted by SAS
CONNORS and JOHN T. ALDHIZER. [redacted] was contacted as a
Potential Racial Informant (GHETTO), and during interview,
voluntarily furnished the attached information regarding the
Modern Strivers.

- 2 - Bureau (Enc. 8)
- ③ - WFO (1-157-1483) (Black Student Union)

JTA:bah
(5) *WFO*

FOIA(b)(7) - (D)



Washington, D.C. 20535
April 11, 1968

MODERN STRIVERS

"The Washington Daily News", a daily newspaper in Washington, D.C., dated January 13, 1968, contained an article entitled "Angry Eastern Students Stage Boycott." This article concerned a student group at Eastern High School called the Modern Strivers who were demonstrating in the cafeteria to complain about an insufficient number of reading teachers at the school and the lack of courses in Negro history.

A source, who is in a position to furnish reliable information, advised on March 16, 1968, that the Modern Strivers or Strivers is a student organization recently formed at Eastern High School, Washington, D.C. (WDC). Source described that Strivers is a group of affable, articulate students not associated with the Black Student Union, (BSU), which has been publicly described as a group of Negro students being organized in the public high school by Stokely Carmichael. Source stated that the Strivers have been critical of the curriculum at Eastern, and have advocated the establishment of freedom schools and the teaching of Negro history and culture. The Strivers were believed to represent about two or three per cent of the student body at Eastern. A large amount of publicity has been afforded the Strivers through the press and television, causing the group to be watched carefully by the school administration. Source stated that the Strivers are not looked upon favorably by the faculty at Eastern, and there is currently a newly-formed group called "The Other Voice" advised by a teacher, Edith Menard. Source stated that this group, formed in opposition to the Strivers, is receiving very good response from Eastern students.

8 - Bureau

③ - WFO

(1-157-1483) (Black Student Union)

UTA:bah

(11) bah

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MODERN STRIVERS

[redacted] advised on March 25, 1968, that he is currently a student at Eastern High School, and the vice president and a member of the Executive Council of the Modern Strivers. He advised that the Modern Strivers originated during September, 1967, as an organization to improve the educational system at Eastern and in the entire WDC school system. According to [redacted] the Strivers were founded because students at Eastern were not able to gain satisfactory employment after graduation, largely due to an inadequate education at Eastern. It was felt that some of Eastern's teachers were insufficiently trained, and many textbooks were out of date.

The Strivers do not have an actual membership; instead, their group is open to any member of the student body at Eastern. Weekly meetings are held, usually on Thursdays, and normally about 75 students attend, although at one meeting there were approximately 250 students in attendance. The president of the Strivers is Gregory Taylor. Several faculty members lend their support to the Strivers, notably John G. Lord and William J. Peterson. An executive council heads the Strivers and normally meets on Wednesdays. There are no dues collected, or requirements on students to attend meetings regularly.

[redacted] advised that so far the Strivers have accomplished the following: two new courses added to the curriculum, social psychology and Negro history; improved food and equipment in the cafeteria; and a new public address system in the cafeteria. For the future, the Strivers intend to implement a "Student Bill of Rights" to improve education and to promote interest of the students in the school. In this regard, a grievance committee will be established, jointly composed of teachers and students, and designed to air student complaints. Additionally, the Strivers plan to submit a report to the District of Columbia Board of Education with methods for providing more meaningful education and community improvements relating to high credit charges and landlords who take advantage of tenants by providing inadequate housing.

[redacted] advised that, as a group, the Strivers would not promote or participate in any kind of racial disturbances. He stated that if a riot occurred, the reaction of those connected with the Strivers would be purely on an

MODERN STRIVERS

individual basis. He advised that the only demonstration by the Strivers was a boycott of the school cafeteria at Eastern in order to improve the quality of the food. [] stated that the Strivers do not plan any kind of demonstration, and at the end of the school year, the organization would probably become inactive, except for an occasional meeting of the executive council.

[] advised that he has heard of BSU but his knowledge of the organization is limited. He stated that, while the Strivers and BSU both desire to improve the Negro's position in the community, the Strivers are more conservative in their approach to the problem, and prefer to first work on a small scale at Eastern High School than established channels. He is aware that the BSU also wants to improve the community, but he does not know any of the methods which they intend to use. He stated that the BSU is organized differently from the Strivers, and the two organizations are in no way connected. He advised that one former member of the Strivers, Dale Ashton, recently resigned from the Modern Strivers to join the BSU. However, [] did not believe that the BSU has any influence over students at Eastern.

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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : SAC, WFO (157-1595) C

DATE: 4/22/68

FROM : SA JOHN T. ALDHIZER

SUBJECT: MODERN STRIVERS, aka
Strivers

Re WFO Letter to Bureau dated 4/11/68 with LHM

Referenced LHM described the Strivers as a high school organization concerned with matters of Eastern High School and other high schools in the D.C. school system. In view of the fact that the officers and advisors of the Strivers have been identified, and the aims and organization of the group outlined, it is not felt that further investigation is warranted.

It is recommended that this case be closed.

Close

1 - WFO
JTA

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| FBI - WASH. F. | |



5010-108

'Freedom School Set at Eastern

Student Group Raised Funds For Black-Oriented Curriculum

By FRED BARNES
Star Staff Writer

A "freedom school" with classes designed to promote black awareness will begin next month for 180 District students at Eastern High School.

The pioneer program will allow students to get academic credit for such courses as black philosophy, black literature, "third world" studies, Swahili and black music.

When it starts Nov. 12, the students—sophomores, juniors and seniors—will spend half their classroom time on required courses at Eastern and the other half on elective subjects in the new black curriculum at a nearby church.

Private funds from foundations and individual donors are financing the program. The donors were not identified by school officials.

The D.C. Board of Education approved the special curriculum last May, four months after the Modern Strivers, a militant student group at Eastern, began pressing for courses that would inject more "relevance" into high school studies. But the board stipulated that the program would have to be financed by private funds.

Short of \$100,000

The Strivers still are somewhat short of a needed \$100,000, and are still negotiating with several foundations for grants. But they have collected enough to begin the program, according to Gergory Taylor, the group's president.

"We feel this is a good example of student power if students can raise this amount of money," said Roger Newell, who is vice president of the Strivers and a senior at Eastern. He added:

"The purpose of education is to prepare you to take on society. No one can take a meaningful role in society without being aware of oneself.

"And this curriculum will be geared to make people more aware of themselves, so they can take a logical, rational, use-

ful position in society and have some effect in changing it."

A white teacher at Eastern, Jay Lord, was a prime mover behind the push for the black courses. He was the faculty adviser of the Strivers during the past school year but now will devote his time to the new courses.

In terms of administration, the school will be treated as an "extension" of Eastern. Asst. School Supt. George R. Rhodes said today. "This is basically an Eastern project," he went on.

Classes at Church

The classes will be held at Keller Memorial Lutheran Church, 907 Maryland Ave. NE, about 10 blocks from Eastern. Two buses will provide transportation.

Teachers have been signed up from diverse fields of work and will be paid on a wage scale approved by the Washington Teachers Union.

Roberta Flack, a popular nightclub singer here, will provide black music instruction. Eboh Chikwuma Eceani, a Biafran and professor of Economics and statistics at Howard University, will teach black history and a course in economics concerning "production, distribution and finance in the black community."

Federal City College instructor Myles Johnson will teach black literature. Betty Wilbert, a District teacher, will handle "third world" studies, a course examining the "similarities, problems and relationships" of the developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

DATE 10/24/68

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THE WASHINGTON POST
& TIMES HERALD

THE EVENING STAR

THE SUNDAY STAR

THE WASHINGTON DAILY NEWS

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